

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 1, 8 and 9 are requested to be cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 2, 4, 6, 7, 10 and 11 are currently being amended. The amendments to claims 6, 7, 10 and 11 are to place these claims in independent form, and do not narrow their scope.

This amendment changes and deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 2-7 and 10-11 are now pending in this application.

Allowable subject matter

Applicant appreciates the indication that claims 6, 7, 10 and 11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claim. Claims 6, 7, 10 and 11 have been amended to be in independent form including all of the limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims, and thus are in *prima facie* condition for allowance. Claims 2-5 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 6, and thus are likewise in *prima facie* condition for allowance.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 4, 5, 8 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0051170 to Kuwahara et al. ("Kuwahara") in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/00118397 to Maruyama et al. ("Maruyama"). Claims 2 and 3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuwahara and Maruyama, and further in view of U.S. Patent Application to Yoshikawa et al. ("Yoshikawa"). These rejections are moot in light of the cancellation of claims 1, 8 and

9, and the amendment to the claims such that dependent claims 2-5 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 6, which has been indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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